

Applic. No.: 09/923,696
Amdt. Dated November 6, 2003
Reply to Office action of August 6, 2003

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for clearing a re-imageable printing form, which comprises treating the printing form with a fluid clearing medium in a non-abrasive manner, irreversibly clearing all image information on a surface of the printing form.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A method for clearing a re-imageable printing form, which comprises cleaning the printing form of ink, and treating the cleaned printing form with a fluid clearing medium in a non-abrasive manner, irreversibly clearing all image information on a surface of the printing form.

Claim 3 (currently amended): A method for clearing a re-imageable printing form, which comprises treating the printing form with a liquid clearing medium in a non-abrasive manner, irreversibly clearing all image information on a surface of the printing form.

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Claim 4 (currently amended): A method for clearing a re-imageable printing form, which comprises treating the printing form with a gaseous clearing medium in a non-abrasive manner, irreversibly clearing all image information on a surface of the printing form.

Claim 5 (original): The method according to claim 1, which includes treating the printing form with ultrasound during the treatment thereof with the fluid clearing medium.

Claim 6 (original): The method according to claim 1, which includes exposing the printing form to the effects of a heat source during the treatment thereof with the fluid clearing medium.

Claim 7 (original): The method according to claim 6, which includes providing at least one of an infrared laser, at least one heat emitter and at least one hot-air blower as the heat source.

Claim 8 (original): The method according to claim 6, which includes exposing the printing form to higher than normal atmospheric pressure during the treatment with the fluid clearing medium.

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Claim 9 (original): The method according to claim 5, which includes providing water as the fluid clearing medium.

Claim 10 (original): The method according to claim 1, which includes providing acid as the fluid clearing medium.

Claim 11 (original): The method according to claim 1, which includes providing an alkali or a base as the fluid clearing medium.

Claim 12 (original): The method according to claim 1, which includes applying the fluid clearing medium to the printing form from at least one sprayer.

Claim 13 (original): The method according to claim 4, which includes removing the printing form from the influence of light during the treatment with the gaseous clearing medium.

Claim 14 (original): The method according to claim 10, which includes providing oxygen as the gaseous clearing medium.

Claim 15 (original): The method according to claim 1, which includes performing the steps thereof in one of a printing machine and a clearing device outside a printing machine.

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Claim 16 (currently amended): A device for clearing a re-imageable printing form, comprising a device for applying fluid clearing medium to the printing form in a non-abrasive manner, irreversibly clearing all image information on a surface of the printing form.

Claim 17 (currently amended): A device for clearing a re-imageable printing form washed free of ink, comprising a device for applying fluid clearing medium to the ink-free printing form in a non-abrasive manner, irreversibly clearing all image information on a surface of the printing form.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The device for clearing a re-imageable printing form according to claim 16, wherein said device for applying fluid clearing medium serves for applying liquid clearing medium to the printing form.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The device for clearing a re-imageable printing form, according to claim 16, wherein said device for applying fluid clearing medium serves for applying gaseous clearing medium to the printing form.

Claim 20 (previously presented): The device for clearing a printing form according to claim 16, including an ultrasound source for irradiating the printing form with ultrasound.

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Claim 21 (previously presented): The device for clearing a printing form according to claim 16, including a heat source for heating the printing form.

Claim 22 (previously presented): The device for clearing a printing form according to claim 21, wherein said heat source is at least one of an infra-red laser, at least one heat emitter, and at least one hot-air blower.

Claim 23 (previously presented): The device for clearing a printing form according to claim 21, including a device for generating higher than normal atmospheric pressure in the environment of the printing form.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The device for clearing a printing form according to claim 16, wherein said device for applying fluid clearing medium to the printing form is a sprayer.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The device for clearing a printing form according to claim 16, including a device for partitioning the printing form against effects of light.

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Claim 26 (currently amended): A printing machine having a device for clearing a re-imageable printing form, comprising a device for applying fluid clearing medium to the printing form in a non-abrasive manner, irreversibly clearing all image information on a surface of the printing form.